



CSA sends Leader accountability in Reducing accidents

In March 2003, the Secretary of Defense challenged the Services to reduce accidents by 50 percent by the end of Fiscal Year (FY) 2005. Our target was 101 mishap fatalities, but we actually suffered 302 Soldier deaths due to accidents. These losses represent a significant impact on our combat power, and many could have been prevented with good leadership.



In the most dangerous environments—those in theater—we have a much reduced accident rate relative to exposure levels. This is due to involved, engaged leaders who properly plan and then closely supervise their Soldiers' missions. Leaders are the key to preventing unnecessary loss. In recognition of this fact,


we are strengthening the performance evaluation system on leader responsibility for risk management.

All leaders will include safety programs and tasks in their evaluation report support forms and counseling sessions. An excellent example is "Effectively incorporating Composite Risk Management in all

mission planning and execution to include quarterly training briefs and quarterly safety council meetings." Open and continuous communication between Soldiers and leaders on this critical topic will work to achieve that mission. Leaders at all levels must lead the way in changing behavior to reduce accidents.

All senior raters will pass their support forms down two levels. For example, division commanders will pass their support forms with safety objectives down to battalion commanders, who then will pass their support forms with safety objectives down to platoon leaders. The NCO chain of supervision is linked in a similar fashion through their rating officials. Regular counseling in support of military evaluation

systems is an already established requirement and practice. An oversight process for this requirement is in place as part of evaluation counseling.

We cannot afford to let this become a "check the box" requirement. Leaders must determine how their unit and Soldiers fit into programs and campaigns organized and promoted by the Army Combat Readiness Center. Leaders should take these broad agendas and translate them into specific tasks and objectives suitable for their unit and mission. This safety accountability focus at the leader level, along with counseling to see it placed squarely into all officer and NCO development, is vital to preserving our most precious resource, our Soldiers. 

GEN Peter Schoomaker
Chief of Staff, Army

CRC answer

The Army Combat Readiness Center (CRC) has many valuable tools

leaders can use to meet the requirements of the Chief of Staff, Army (CSA) directive to include safety in evaluation reports. These programs, initiatives, and metrics were developed to help leaders at every level integrate Composite Risk Management (CRM) into all facets of their units' operations and training. They also were designed to help leaders determine the value of their unit safety programs as a whole, while individual Soldiers can use the programs and metrics for inclusion in their support forms and counseling checklists.

Army Readiness Assessment Program (ARAP)

ARAP is a Web-based, battalion-level commander's tool used to evaluate unit climate and culture on issues including safety, risk management, command and control, and standards of performance. The program consists of an online assessment followed by proposed courses of action to improve the unit's effectiveness. ARAP was developed for battalion commanders as a part of their command inspection program but is now available to all Headquarters, Department of the Army and major command staffs.

More information on ARAP can be found on the CRC homepage at <https://crc.army.mil> or by going to <https://unitready.army.mil>.

Preliminary loss reports (PLRs) and "Got Risk?" posters

PLRs and "Got Risk?" posters are distributed to commanders via e-mail to raise awareness of the latest accidents. PLRs are generated by a team at the CRC for each Army accident involving a fatality and include tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) to help prevent similar accidents from occurring. The "Got Risk?" posters highlight the basic facts of accidents occurring during specific 7-day intervals. All PLRs and "Got Risk?" posters are available on the CRC homepage at <https://crc.army.mil>.

Army Safe Driver Training (ASDT)

ASDT consists of hands-on accident avoidance training in several key areas including braking, skids, and high-speed maneuvering. This training can be performed on both conventional vehicles and HMMWVs. Commanders can request this program by contacting the CRC G-5 at (334) 255-2461 or DSN 558-2461. More information on the ASDT program can be found online at <https://crc.army.mil/RiskManagement/detail.asp?iData=56&iCat=454&iChannel=25&nChannel=RiskManagement>.

POV Toolbox

The POV Toolbox was designed to help leaders fight the number one killer of Soldiers outside combat—private vehicle crashes. This Web-based program includes the CSA's 6-Point Program, a POV inspection checklist, tools for trip planning and accident trend analysis, an accident review guide, options available to commanders in dealing with unsafe drivers, and leaders' guides. The POV Toolbox can be found online at <https://crc.army.mil/RiskManagement/detail.asp?iData=26&iCat=516&iChannel=25&nChannel=RiskManagement>.

On-site CRM training

The CRC's Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) provide 3-day commander/leader courses and 5-day NCO courses on CRM for brigade- or division-sized units free of charge at the requesting unit's location. The MTTs also provide a CRM train-the-trainer course on request. Commanders can schedule these courses by contacting the CRC G-7 at (334) 255-0242 or DSN 558-0242. More information on MTT visits can be found online at <https://crc.army.mil/Training/cat.asp?iCat=519&iChannel=16&nChannel=Training>.

Assistance visits

Commanders can request a white-hat team to conduct an on-site study of their units' operations and make recommendations to improve

their CRM processes. The visits can be scheduled through the CRC G-5 at (334) 255-2461 or DSN 558-2461. More information on assistance visits can be found online at <https://crc.army.mil/Training/detail.asp?iData=43&iCat=519&iChannel=16&nChannel=Training>.

Commander's Safety Course

This course is a mandatory requirement for all commanders and can be found on the Combat Readiness University Web site at <https://safetylms.army.mil/librix/loginhtml2.asp?v=usasc>.

Magazines

The CRC produces three full-color publications geared toward hazard identification and CRM: *Flightfax* (aviation), *Countermeasure* (ground), and *ImpaX* (driving). Electronic copies of each publication and subscription information can be found online at <https://crc.army.mil/MediaAndPubs/cat.asp?iCat=59&iChannel=19&nChannel=MediaAndPubs>.

Commander's Toolbox

The Commander's Toolbox is an online package derived from best practices in the field and includes checklists, briefing formats, sample SOPs, training materials, automated risk assessment worksheets, etc. To access the Commander's Toolbox link, go to the CRC homepage and then click on the "Combat Readiness University" icon. Use your AKO user name and password to log in, and then go to "My Courses."

Guardian Angel

The Guardian Angel program is a national campaign that pairs family members, churches, schools, and other interested persons and groups with individual Soldiers to help keep them safe during off-duty activities. This program is especially useful during a Soldier's post-deployment phase. More information on the Guardian Angel program is available online at <https://crcapps.army.mil/guardianangel/index.html>.

Safety awards program

Commanders can find policy, guidance, and samples of how to run their own safety awards program online at <https://crc.army.mil/CRC/detail.asp?iData=80&iCat=544&iChannel=13&nChannel=CRC>.

In addition, the CRC offers tools for individual officers and NCOs:

ASMIS-1 Aviation Risk Assessment Tool. This module of the ASMIS-1 system guides the user through the risk management process during aviation mission planning and can be found online at <https://crcapps.army.mil/>. (Note: ASMIS-2 Aviation is being developed and should be available soon.)

ASMIS-1 Ground Risk Assessment Tool. This module of the ASMIS-1 system guides the user through the risk management process during ground mission planning for operations such as convoys and can be found online at <https://crcapps.army.mil/>. (Note: ASMIS-2 Ground is being developed

and should be available soon.)

ASMIS-2 POV Risk Assessment Tool. This updated version of the original ASMIS pairs individual Soldiers with their supervisors to help plan POV trips and make appropriate risk decisions. At the end of the assessment, Soldiers are provided with a full itinerary, a map with directions, and an automated DA Form 31. ASMIS-2 can be accessed online at <https://crcapps.army.mil/>.

Additional Duty Safety Officer Course. This is a mandatory course for all additional duty safety personnel and is available online at <https://safetylms.army.mil/>.

Composite Risk Management Course. This is an online course that provides policy, practice, and tools on CRM. To access CRM course material, go to the CRC homepage at <https://crc.army.mil/>, and then click on the "Combat Readiness University" icon. Use your AKO user name and password to log in, and then go to "My Courses."

Videos. The CRC has a wide range of videos that can be used during training. Subjects range from driving POVs, explosives safety, HMMWV rollovers, aviation, and others. To access the videos from the CRC homepage, go to the "Media & Magazines" channel at <https://crc.army.mil/MediaAndPubs/detail.asp?iData=75&iCat=58&iChannel=19&nChannel=MediaAndPubs>, click the "Video Index" link, and then click to view or order.

Deployment Safety Guide. The V Corps Safety Office developed this extensive

manual that provides safety guidance, policy, and tools for many phases of deployment and can be found online at <https://crc.army.mil/Guidance/detail.asp?iData=207&iCat=371&iChannel=15&nChannel=Guidance>.

Confined Space Guide. This guide provides instructions on how to protect personnel who work in permit-required confined spaces. For more information, go to the confined space guide link on the CRC homepage at <https://crc.army.mil/Guidance/detail.asp?iData=205&iCat=456&iChannel=15&nChannel=Guidance>.

Up-Armored HMMWV Rollover Procedures. Graphic Training Aid (GTA) 55-03-030, *Up-Armored HMMWV Emergency Procedures Performance Measures*, consists of step-by-step emergency procedures for rollovers, water egress drills, MEDEVAC requests, and training suggestions. More information on this GTA can be found online at <https://crc.army.mil/Tools/detail.asp?iData=58&iCat=547&iChannel=17&nChannel=Tools>.

The following metric examples are for officers and NCOs to support active safety measures within their formations. Under no circumstances is the intent to foster a zero-defect environment. Rather, the goal

is for units to quantify safety requirements, programs, and policies across the full spectrum of command to set the conditions for Soldiers, leaders, and commanders to own the edge. Each unit is highly encouraged to create and tailor metrics specific to their individual missions and requirements, showing linkage and continuity across every echelon from top to bottom.

- Effectively incorporated CRM in all mission planning and execution, to include quarterly training briefs and quarterly safety council meetings.

- Achieved 100 percent compliance of ASMIS-2 POV use by unit personnel.

- Achieved 100 percent reporting of all accidents in accordance with Army regulations using the Accident Reporting Automated System.

- Within 90 days of assuming command or responsibility, executed all safety awareness and risk management programs to include ARAP, the Additional Duty Safety Officer Course, and CRM training.

- ___ percent of my Soldiers are enrolled in Combat Readiness University online programs.

- ___ percent of my Soldiers participated in ASDT programs, including

Motorcycle Mentorship and the Accident Avoidance Course.

- ___ percent of my aviation crews completed Aircrew Coordination Training-Enhanced.

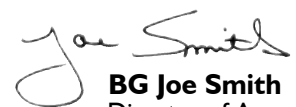
- Developed unit-specific safety and accident avoidance training classes using CRC-developed products presented in officer and NCO professional development training sessions.

- Received, reviewed, and distributed both “Got Risk?” posters and PLRs across my formations to prevent similar events from occurring.

- Conducted thorough after-action reviews to capture best practices and TTPs that were then shared across formations to improve communication and refine and standardize SOPs to further mitigate risk.

- Never walked by an unsafe act or procedure without making on-the-spot corrections to ensure compliance with approved standards.

- Provided subordinates with the maximum planning time possible (1/3-2/3 rule) to minimize shortcuts and enhance the potential for overall mission success. 🇺🇸



BG Joe Smith
Director of Army Safety
CG, CRC

a Rider SPEAKS OUT

SFC CRAIG A. DAILEY
Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter Project
Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

I'm a motorcycle enthusiast. I ride a sport bike and will be the first and loudest to yell "foul" if the Army tries to take away that privilege. I know the feeling of "getting on it." My idea of heaven is dragging my pegs around the "twisties" on a warm day when the tires are really gripping.

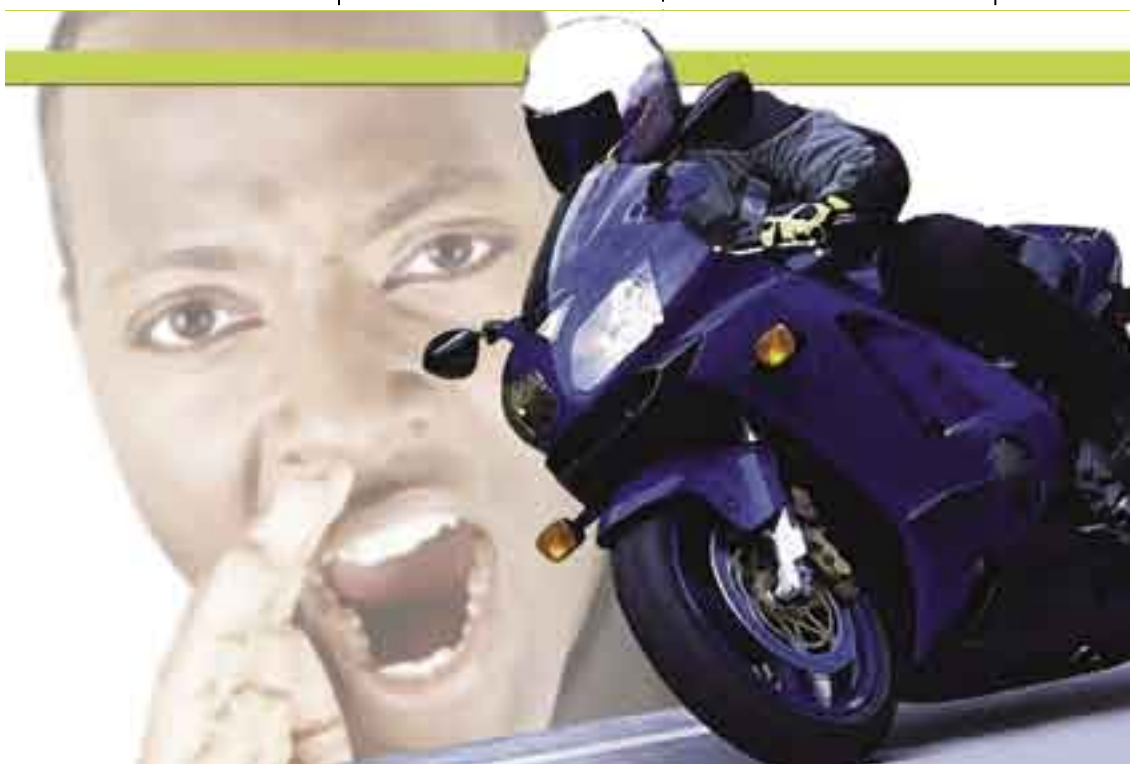
As much as I love riding, I know there is a flip side to this coin—it's called "road rash." I've come down with the "rash" twice.

My first accident happened when I was 17. I was trying to impress a girl by revving my engine so she could hear the roar of my pipes. I was eyeing her instead of watching the street and rear-ended a car stopped at a light. As I sailed through the air, I could hear plastic and metal grinding as

my bike slid across the pavement. I landed hard and then tumbled into the light pole. I ruptured a kidney, damaged a kneecap, banged up my motorcycle and delayed my entry into the Army

fortune was on my side. My commander, CPT C. Dean Taylor, took my keys and made me go to the motorcycle rider's safety course. No one else—not my first sergeant, platoon

That was 15 years and three safety courses ago. I had my second accident a couple years back when I hit a dog while riding home after a night aerial gunnery range. My training and



by three months.

Insurance fixed the bike before I left for advanced individual training, and my father shipped it to my first duty station—Fort Carson, Colo. Again,

sergeant or even my squad leader—cared enough to ensure I was competent to operate that machine. My commander, however, had the sense to realize I was dangerous.

experience couldn't have prevented that accident. However, the Army taught me to wear my personal protective equipment (PPE), so I was wearing a leather jacket, BDU pants,

combat boots, gloves and a DOT-approved helmet. I hit the ground doing 30 mph, rashed-up the leather and got a few bruises, but I got up and rolled my bike the last block to my house.

To be honest, I haven't always been a poster child for riding safely. I've been fortunate enough to survive my experiences and learn from them, but not everyone is so lucky. It's frustrating to see preliminary loss reports in my e-mails every day telling me we've lost another Soldier in a motorcycle accident. This is a problem that can be fixed, but fixing it is going to take leadership, responsibility, accountability and discipline.

Leadership

As a leader, I always know when one of my Soldiers is making a large purchase because they can't do it without talking about it. My platoon leader (who is also a rider) and I always have the team leaders ensure the guy is financially capable and mature enough to buy the bike. After that, we ensure he's sent to rider training.

It's the same approach we take in paratrooper training. As a jumpmaster, I'd never allow a trooper to exit the aircraft without a jumpmaster personnel inspection before loading

and a safety-verified equipment check before the green light. How many paratroopers exit aircraft every year without a fatality? Airborne accidents can happen and people will die; that is a risk we face, but we mitigate that risk as best we can. Why can't we approach reducing the risks involved in riding motorcycles the same way?

Responsibility

Riders and leaders both bear responsibility for these senseless motorcycle accidents. In most cases, it was the rider's own stupidity, ignorance and inexperience that killed them. I get angry having to say it, but some people aren't mature enough to care of themselves. Once again, senior leaders are going to have to add another responsibility to their already overloaded plate. However, there are strategies for that.

First, as Soldiers return from deployments with pockets full of money, strict adherence to safety regulations must be enforced. From my foxhole, Soldiers should have to turn over the keys to their bikes until they've obtained their Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) Basic RiderCourse SM certification. Then, a copy of their certification needs to become a

part of their platoon sergeant's leader book. Within 12 to 18 months, they should be required to show their experienced rider's course card. And that leads to the next issue—accountability.

Accountability

Just because my DA Form 348 qualifies me to drive a motor pool full of vehicles doesn't mean I can waltz in and drive one I'm not certified on. No motor officer would risk his career by issuing me a vehicle I wasn't qualified to operate because he knows he'd be held accountable. We hold Soldiers with automobiles accountable by checking their travel plans and inspecting their vehicles before four-day weekends. Why don't we do the same for Soldiers with motorcycles? We have rules, but there's no accountability above the rider's level. If we're holding riders accountable for their actions, then we must hold ourselves accountable for ensuring they're qualified to ride.

Discipline

Accountability must include tough discipline—and that hasn't always happened. For example, one commander I served under mandated all motorcycles be stopped at the gates and their riders inspected for PPE

and MSF training cards. However, riders found in violation weren't cited like they would be if they were DUI. Instead, they were turned around and sent back into the fray lacking the knowledge and equipment to ride safely or according to regulations. Instead of doing that, leadership should've required the rider to surrender his keys and then impound his bike until his command signed a memorandum stating he'd been disciplined (post traffic fine or Article 15 for "failure to follow an order") and trained.

If leaders truly care about Soldiers, they must get tough to stop these senseless deaths. It's a terrible loss for families and units when Soldiers return home safely after a year or more in combat only to kill themselves during the first three months they're back. These Soldiers were SOMEONE's responsibility. They were all defenders of our nation and died because of negligence and complacency.

Bottom line

It's time to hold commanders, NCOs and Soldiers responsible and accountable and use tough discipline where needed. Until then, it's like sending troopers out the door without checking their 'chutes 🍁

TWO FOR the ROAD

BOB VAN ELSBERG
Managing Editor

It was a warm August day in Alabama, perfect for cruising on a motorcycle and enjoying the breeze. For 2LT Adam Bennett and his wife, Laura, it was the last chance to ride Adam's Harley-Davidson Sportster before it would be shipped to Hawaii, where Adam would join the 25th Infantry Division after his Black Hawk training. It was a lazy Saturday morning, and he wanted to burn the gas in the bike's fuel tank before it was shipped. One look outside was all it took.

"It was sunny and clear ... it wasn't even windy. It was a perfect day to go for a ride," Adam said.

Adam and Laura donned their full-face helmets, long pants and short-sleeve shirts. They had riding jackets, but the heat discouraged them from wearing them. Adam also wore boots and gloves. Their route would take them on a leisurely cruise on country roads from their home in Enterprise to Dothan, Ala., and back. Although they'd taken short rides around town before, this was the first time Laura rode with Adam on a day cruise. She climbed onto the back of Adam's bike, a low-rider variation of the Sportster. It was Adam's first bike, and he'd picked it because it had plenty of power. He'd figured he might as well buy the



kind of bike he would ultimately end up with.

They pulled out of the driveway of their townhouse and were soon on state Highway 27, a one-lane road that curved through wooded areas and past farms to the nearby city of Ozark.

They rode through Ozark and then turned onto a road that would take them to Highway 431. They'd only gone a few miles when they saw a big Assembly of God Church on the left. The parking lot was filling with vehicles

for a wedding that day. Adam turned his head to tell Laura how nice the church looked. In that instant, the driver of an SUV ahead of Adam hit his brakes, trying to avoid another car that had stopped at the last second to turn



into the church parking lot. Suddenly, Adam and Laura were in big trouble.

"I looked away from the road ... for no more than two or three seconds, but that was long enough for the people in front of me to stop and me not to see it," Adam said.

Adam apparently glanced forward just before the impact and tried to stop. Laura saw his right hand pulling the brake lever and felt the bike begin to slow down, but it was too late. The bike slammed into the SUV's right rear fender and skidded down the right side of the vehicle. The crash threw Adam and Laura from the bike and into a ditch on the right shoulder. The impact was traumatic.

"I remember landing on my knees and elbows with my stomach on the ground," Laura said. "I was on a slope and could see Adam in front of me. He was on his back and the bike was lying right behind him."

Laura had broken her

left elbow. A trained nurse, she knew she shouldn't move for fear of worsening her injuries. As she lay on the ground, she gently rolled onto her right arm and elbow to reduce the pain. She could see Adam a short distance away. He'd suffered a concussion and couldn't understand the people around him urging him to lay still and be calm.

"He was kind of fighting them," Laura said. "He was trying to get his helmet off and, of course, you shouldn't do that."

She tried to call to Adam and encourage him to be calm. But her visor was jammed in the down position, so all that came out were muffled sounds.

Within minutes, the police and ambulances arrived. Adam and Laura were taken to a medical center in Ozark, where they were stabilized and X-rayed. After Laura's arm was placed in a splint, she was discharged. However, Adam's injuries were

much more serious—his lower jaw was completely severed and hung limp. A surgeon who specialized in jaw surgery was on duty at the hospital in Enterprise, so Adam and Laura were loaded into an ambulance and taken there. Adam was admitted and quickly prepared for surgery. After the operation was completed, the surgeon told Adam how he'd held his jaw in his hand while performing the surgery.

Adam also had a broken left wrist and injuries to the ligaments in his left knee. Laura's broken left elbow required extensive surgery and months of painful physical therapy treatments. Unfortunately, the damage is permanent and she will never be able to completely straighten her arm. What had started out as a leisurely pleasure ride ended up being anything but what they had expected.

Although the insurance paid to replace the Harley, the couple

has chosen not to ride again. Both decided that the price of a mistake—in this case a moment's inattention—is too great. Although Adam's full-face helmet saved his life, it didn't prevent the injuries that have delayed his pilot training four months and jeopardized his Hawaii assignment. No amount of personal protective equipment, he said, can make a rider come out the winner in a crash with a car. 🏍️

Contact the author at (334) 255-2688, DSN 558-2688, or by e-mail at robert.vanelsberg@crc.army.mil.

too big too Fast too soon

MSG KEITH E. FOLGER
Senior Maintenance NCO
HHD 317 QM BN

I was stationed near Stuttgart, Germany, when I bought my first “real” motorcycle—a Kawasaki GT 750—in 1986. Back then, if you had a motorcycle endorsement on your stateside driver license, they just added it to your USAREUR driver license—no special training or safety courses required. I had an endorsement from my home state of Illinois—I just “forgot” to mention I was limited to 150cc or smaller engines. After all, why bother the folks in USAREUR with such minor details.

My Kawasaki was a big street bike with shaft drive, air suspension, electronic gauges and a mean-sounding exhaust. I quickly learned it was MUCH faster than the 125cc Yamaha I’d previously owned. I could do 0 to 80 mph in a block, a big change from a top speed of 60 mph. One of my friends had a Suzuki 650 Katana, and I was sure I could keep up with him because I had a bigger bike.

We decided to ride at Solitude, a curvy road that ran through the hills to a castle. I’d like to say I got to see the castle, but I didn’t because about five minutes

into the ride I discovered I didn’t know how to corner. My more experienced friend could corner like famed racer John Surtees—hanging off the bike at speed. I didn’t want to be left behind when he accelerated to pass a car, so I tried passing while entering a right-left “S” blind curve.

I was going 85 mph when I cleared the car. As I did, I saw a car in the oncoming lane and quickly swerved right to avoid it. Just then the road curved left, and I was shocked when I realized I couldn’t lean far enough left to make the turn. I froze—I felt I couldn’t move the bike.



I didn't know how to countersteer in a turn.

I ran off the road and into a ditch. I tried to keep the bike balanced and slow down on the grass, but the bike shook violently and I went over the handlebars onto a grassy embankment. I landed on my hands and rolled forward, trying to control my fall. I then slid feet first for a short distance on my butt before my heels caught and I started flipping. Every time I hit the ground it felt as if I stopped for a split second and then flipped again. Finally, I went up into the air and landed hard on my back. At last I'd stopped.

I was wondering where the bike was when I felt the license plate tap my left boot. The bike had tumbled to the bottom of the embankment and stopped just short of my leg.

I was numb all over, but I wasn't scared because everything had happened so quickly. I moved my fingers, toes and head and realized my back wasn't broken. I then sat up and realized I couldn't breathe. I stood up to check the bike and became dizzy. The driver of the

car I'd passed ran up and grabbed my arm and told me to sit. As best I understood his German, he chided me for riding too fast, and then told me I was lucky to be alive. I tried to agree, but I couldn't get enough wind to talk.

A German doctor who spoke English

stopped and checked me. He explained my breathing problems could be due to a cracked rib and I should have X-rays taken. My friend then came back. He'd been waiting for me and wondering where I'd been.

For about a half hour I could barely breathe. I was finally able to take deeper breaths, but it was very painful. For about a month afterward, my lower back would spasm painfully every time I moved. I couldn't apply backward pressure to my wrists or thrust my arms out without pain, let alone do my job or pushups. We had a field

training exercise the following weekend, so I just got some Tylenol™ and sucked it up.

God must have saved me, because I don't know why the bike didn't crush me during the accident. Solitude has a lot of trees, but, fortunately, there weren't any

where I crashed. I paid about 250 Deutsche Marks (DM) to the towing service and, about a month later, was charged 450 DM by the Polizei for the ambulance ride. I was also given a ticket and few points for my license.

I was glad to be alive. Afterward, I spoke to other bikers and learned how to countersteer and corner better. I didn't let the accident scare me away from riding. However, from then on I rode with a great deal more respect for my machine.

I realized this accident was my

fault. I was driving too fast for my level of experience and the traffic conditions. I was passing on a blind curve—a very dangerous thing—and thought I knew how to ride when, in reality, I didn't. I assumed a bike's quicker acceleration compared to a car meant I could corner at higher speeds. I rode too big a bike too fast and too soon and almost died proving myself wrong.

Looking back, that was pretty dumb thinking. I'm 43 now and have learned the hard way from sucking up injuries. There is a War on Terrorism going on, but this Army can't use you if you're broken.

**Contact the author at
(785) 843-1651, ext 241.**



Check out the Motorcycle Safety Foundation's web site at www.msf-usa.org for more information

a RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

CW4 EARNEST EAKINS
Motorcycle Safety Program Manager
U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center

I recently attended the Motorcycle Safety Foundation's (MSF) Basic RiderCourseSM offered on post. It's not that I'm an inexperienced rider; I started riding when I was 11 and got my first license when I was 15. I considered myself an experienced rider, but I felt I should take the course to know more about the requirements placed on military riders. As it turned out, the course was very enlightening. I discovered most of the attendees had never been on a motorcycle, let alone ridden one solo. I thought the course was perfect for them, but not for me. After all, I was an experienced rider.

Most of my fellow students planned to purchase their bikes

for inexpensive on-post transportation. The exception was a small group who planned to purchase sport bikes as their first motorcycle. I recognize the peer pressure to have the sharpest-looking and fastest bike, but I don't understand a rider starting out on one of these machines. Riding is a learning experience. In my humble opinion, riders should learn on smaller, less-powerful bikes before climbing onto one that could shame a Lamborghini or fill up the lane like a Mack truck.

If new riders would think about it, they might realize the quick-handling characteristics of their coveted sport bike might also be a recipe for disaster. By the same token, heavy cruisers can also be dangerous because turning these slower-handling bikes takes more time and



effort. Either kind of bike poses serious risks for inexperienced riders. Take it from someone who knows; once you have dropped the change for ownership, you're going to ride your investment.

Although the *Basic RiderCourse*SM and the *Experienced RiderCourse*SM are taught at many Army installations, some posts offer only the experienced course. That creates a problem because new riders who take the experienced course first miss the important skills taught in the basic course. That can lead them to develop bad habits, something I can attest to because I fell into that category. Prior to taking the basic course, I was very confident I was an experienced rider. As I took the course, I realized I'd developed many bad habits over the years.

That was quite a wake-up call. I recognized we experienced riders must take an honest look at ourselves every so often, and the mirror of choice is an MSF-approved course or refresher course. Some military installations are now offering or requiring refresher training in an attempt to reduce motorcycle accidents. The MSF recommends all riders complete

refresher training at least every other year or whenever changing to a different type of motorcycle. In addition to this training, riders should take it upon themselves to practice critical maneuvers such as braking, lane selection and swerving. "Outer-inner-outer" cornering is a particularly valuable skill that allows the bike to be upright at the point where the rider can see around the corner. This technique gives the rider better control over the bike and is safer.

There is an easy, threefold recipe for success for us riders. First, we must honestly examine our riding skills and recognize our limitations. Second, we must choose the right bike for our level of riding skill. Third, we must recognize we may have developed bad habits over the years we need to get rid of. The goal is to be safe and proficient, and that's something we can do through proper training, continued education and disciplined practice. The payoff for following this simple recipe will be a long and happy riding career. 🏍️

Contact CW4 Eakins at (334) 255-2781, DSN 558-2781, or by e-mail at ernest.eakins@crc.army.mil.

SET UP FOR a FALL

SPC SHAUN LYSTON
Fort Campbell, Ky.

In June 2005, I bought a very fast Buell Firebolt 1200cc motorcycle.

Although I had very little riding experience, I'd convinced myself the Buell would be a good investment. I was required to take Motorcycle Safety Foundation (MSF) training and opted to ride the Buell rather than one of the lighter, easier-to-maneuver motorcycles offered for the course.

As I took the course, I saw other riders falling as they tried to make sharp turns at very low speeds. Making those turns on the Buell—which was intended for high-speed riding—was tough. My owner's manual, which would have given me information on the bike's handling, was on backorder when I bought the bike. Also, when I picked up the bike from the dealership, the service department didn't adjust the shocks to my weight. That not only made the bike less comfortable to ride, it also made it more dangerous to handle during braking. On a motorcycle, letting off the throttle and using the front brake shifts more of the motorcycle's weight to the front wheel. Properly adjusted front shocks will compress only slightly during braking, which helps the rider maintain control. Shocks that are not set firm enough, however, will cause the bike to "nosedive." When that happens during hard braking, the front wheel can lock up and toss the



rider over the handlebars.

That's exactly what happened to me. When I landed on the ground, the bike started to fall on me and I reached up to catch it. Fortunately, I caught myself before I put my arm through the still-spinning rear wheel, which would have given me a serious injury. As it turned out, all I had was a few bruises. Had this happened on the open road, I could easily have been killed.

Dumping a bike damages your pride, your body and your investment, and my experience taught me a couple of lessons. First, if you're taking an MSF course and have the option of riding a bike they provide, take advantage of it. These bikes are easier and safer to learn on than bikes like my Buell and allow you to try out riding before investing in a new bike. Second, don't buy a bike until you've ridden it enough to know how it handles and if it fits you. Many dealerships don't like you doing that, but others understand your need to make the right choice. You're the one who has to live with the decision, so make sure you get a bike you can safely handle and enjoy riding. 🏍️

Contact the author by e-mail at shaun.lyston@us.army.mil.

CROSWALKS OR CROSSHAIRS

BOB VAN ELSBERG
Managing Editor



I was stopped in the right-hand lane at a crosswalk on Norfolk Navy Base, Va., as a young woman stepped off the curb on my right. It was about 4 p.m. and a flashing yellow signal above the crosswalk warned the homeward-bound rush hour drivers to exercise caution on behalf of pedestrians. The young woman was about to step past my pickup when a compact car flew by me, barely missing her. I took careful note of the vehicle and, sure enough, caught up with it at the next intersection. Taking advantage of a few moments of idle

said he hadn't seen the woman. "Amazing," I thought. Did he also not see the warning signal and crosswalk markings?

The incident particularly got my attention because most drivers on Fort Rucker, Ala., exercise courtesy at crosswalks. And it's not just a matter of courtesy; it's a matter of safety. When pedestrians and cars come together violently in crosswalks, the results can be crippling or fatal. Because of that, it's worth taking a few moments to consider some commonsense rules.



Last year two Soldiers were injured in crosswalk accidents. In one accident, the driver was blinded by glare and condensation on his windshield and could not see three Soldiers in the crosswalk. In the other accident, a motorist failed to yield right-of-way.

time at the red light, I stepped from my truck and had a brief conversation with the young driver through his open sunroof. He

• When approaching an intersection or marked crosswalk, drivers should be alert for all pedestrian movement.

• Drivers must yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.

• Drivers should not pass a vehicle stopped ahead at a crosswalk.

• Pedestrians must never assume right-of-way at a crosswalk and enter when there isn't adequate time and space for an approaching driver to stop.

• Before stepping into the street, pedestrians should look left, then right and then left again to observe any approaching traffic. Also, if you're at an intersection, look over your left shoulder for any turning vehicles. Remember to reverse the sequence in countries like England, where motorists drive on the left side of the street.

• Pedestrians should establish eye contact with drivers and ensure the vehicle is stopped or at least visibly slowing down before entering the crosswalk.

• Pedestrians must obey "Walk/Don't Walk" pedestrian control signals at intersections which have these lights. These signals are synchronized with

other traffic signals at the intersection to promote pedestrian safety.

• Pedestrians crossing at intersections or crosswalks where cars are parked need to walk to the edge of those vehicles and look carefully before crossing.

• Pedestrians need to be alert when entering crosswalks. Reading, listening to a headset or "walking under the influence" can quickly turn a pedestrian into a hood ornament.

• And here's one more for no extra charge. Try to avoid driving through the intersection until the pedestrian has safely crossed to the other side. Tempting as it might be to pull forward; other less-attentive drivers might misinterpret your movement as the intersection being clear and turn the unlucky pedestrian into a speed bump. 🚗

Contact the author at (334) 255-2688, DSN 558-2688, or by e-mail at robert.vanelsberg@crc.army.mil

hang UP and drive!

Feel a little buzz in your pocket or hear a cute little tune emanating from your cell phone? If you do, you'd better just ignore it or find a safe place to pull over and stop before answering. And don't even THINK about punching in the numbers and yakking with one hand holding your cell phone to your ear. If you do, you're likely to see flashing blue lights in your rearview mirror and be given something you won't like.

You may have read it elsewhere, but just in case you haven't gotten the news, Uncle Sam has nixed using cell phones while driving your POV on post or a government vehicle anywhere unless it's a hands-free device. Along with the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration (NHTSA), Uncle Sam has rejected the notion driving is a multi-tasking experience where motorists can make phone calls, attend to personal grooming or polish off a meal while safely driving. Indeed, a survey last year found 25 percent of police-reported accidents involved inattentive driving, with more than half of those involving

distracted drivers. The general opinion is keeping an automobile moving down the street without hitting annoying obstacles such as pedestrians, power poles and other vehicles uses up most peoples' concentration powers.

Details at 11 ... Although the Army hasn't yet sent out a formal policy letter, the rule has been published in the Code of Federal Regulations and will be published in Army Regulation (AR) 190-5, *Motor Vehicle Traffic Supervision*, and in AR 385-55, *Prevention of Motor Vehicle Accidents*. When the Army's official policy letter comes out, we'll post the contents in this magazine. Until then, you should know installation commanders not only can enforce the new cell phone policy, they can impose even greater restrictions in the name of safety. If you don't want to see flashing blue lights in your rearview mirror, check your post newspaper and watch for on-post traffic signs giving your commander's guidance on this issue. 📱



Motorcycle mentor program gets 'thumbs-up!'

GEN Peter J. Schoomaker, Chief of Staff, Army, has approved the Army's new Motorcycle Mentorship Program, first mentioned in this magazine in the September-October 2005 issue. The program creates motorcycle clubs where experienced riders will pair with new riders to teach them the responsibilities of motorcycle ownership and safe riding skills.

Concerns over the increasing number of Army motorcycle fatalities have driven the creation of this new program, which is based upon one developed by the U.S. Air Force. POV crashes remain the Army's number one accidental killer. So far in FY 2006 (as of the end of January), 30 Soldiers have died in POV accidents, with motorcycle accidents accounting for eight of those fatalities.

The program is designed to be responsive to Soldiers' needs. Posts are encouraged to allow multiple clubs so riders of different classes of motorcycles can sponsor clubs geared toward their riding style and interests. The goal is to provide new riders a positive role model who also enjoys riding and can share valuable skills based upon years of experience. ✕

For more information on this program, contact Mr. Walt Beckman at (334) 255-9377, DSN 558-9377, or by e-mail at walter.beckman@crc.army.mil.

delayed determined distracted dead



Investigator's Note: The hardest thing about my job is seeing the pain and suffering of those who are left behind after a Soldier dies. I know these investigations must be conducted and hope the information gleaned may prevent future accidents and save lives. More than anything, however, I pray someday we investigators will be out of work because there won't be any accidents. No more tragically shortened lives, grieving families, heart-broken friends or holes in our formations. We live for that day, but it's not here yet. This story is one example of why. The names of the Soldiers have been changed for the purposes of this article.

PFC Mark Jackson was a motivated young Airborne trooper who loved the excitement and challenge of his mission in the Army. His leadership had observed his attitude and drive to improve himself as a Soldier. They'd noted he typically volunteered to help with any task that came his unit's

way. He was hoping to join the Special Forces or become a Ranger in the near future.

Mark's unit was part of a division not only noted for its aggressive combat skills, but also for a tough, effective, leader-driven safety program. The division had gone 293 days without a fatality and was celebrating by giving its Soldiers a

four-day weekend. That Friday, Mark's company sponsored an organizational day for the Soldiers and their families. Before being released at 4 p.m., the first sergeant and platoon sergeants briefed Mark and his fellow Soldiers on seatbelt use, having designated drivers and not driving under the influence. After being released,

Mark went back to the barracks, met a buddy and had dinner. About 7 p.m., he went across post to borrow a 1998 Ford Explorer from a friend. He was interested in buying the Explorer and the long weekend would give him an excellent opportunity to test drive it.

Saturday was a slow day, but the karaoke lounge at the USA

Sports Club on post got pretty lively on Saturday evenings, so Mark drove the Explorer there. He was having a good time talking to PFC Andrea Wilson, whom he'd met a few days earlier. They were hitting it off well and he asked her to join him at a friend's house off post to watch movies. They left the club about 1:30 a.m. and got into the Explorer to follow Mark's friends to their home. As they pulled out of the parking lot, Andrea asked Mark if he was going to wear his seatbelt. He said he was "fine" and drove off without buckling up.

As they drove off post, Mark was separated from his friends at a stop light. As he waited for the light to change, Mark watched his friends turn left at the intersection and head up a two-lane, unlighted road. When the light turned green, Mark, determined to catch up with his friends, turned onto the road and accelerated to 75 mph, ignoring the 55 mph speed limit.

They'd only gone a short distance when Andrea lit a cigarette and placed the pack in the center console. Mark glanced away from the road to see what she was doing and didn't realize he was drifting toward the right shoulder. He

also ignored or didn't see a 45 mph caution sign marking a left-hand curve about 200 feet ahead. Before he realized it, the Explorer's tires went off the right side of the road and about four inches onto the shoulder. Mark reacted immediately but steered too sharply to the left, crossing his lane and heading toward a car in the oncoming lane. Seeing the car, he swerved hard to the right, sending the Explorer spinning clockwise out of control as it skidded sideways down the road.


The still-spinning Explorer had turned almost completely backward when it skidded sideways onto the shoulder. As the Explorer's tires slid sideways, they built up spoil (loose dirt, pine needles and other material) and ultimately caught, causing the vehicle to violently roll over twice before landing on its wheels. With no seatbelt to restrain him, Mark was thrown into the sunroof forcefully enough to pop it out of the vehicle. Mark flew out of the Explorer and landed on the ground about nine feet in front of it. He'd broken his neck and suffered several other serious injuries. Andrea, who'd worn her seatbelt, had a concussion but

was otherwise safe inside the vehicle.

Mark's friends had seen the accident and came back to help. As soon as they got Andrea out of the car, she went to check on Mark. She couldn't find a pulse and started CPR. A passing motorist called 911, and police, medical and fire department personnel responded quickly. However, it was too late for Mark; he was pronounced dead at the scene. The decision not to buckle up blended with reckless driving and a moment's inattention ended the life of a 19-year-old would-be Ranger prematurely.

Nothing that happened that night can ever be taken back, but some things can be learned from this tragedy. First and foremost, always wear your seatbelt. It may not always save a wearer's life, but it will give them a better than 50 percent chance of walking away after a rollover crash. Second, always pay attention to the road—not what's happening inside the vehicle—and stay alert for caution signs and other warnings. Finally, speed limits exist to protect you and other drivers on the road. They're based upon a best-case scenario when the weather is clear and you have good visibility. At

night, especially on unlit roads, adjust your speed to the distance you can clearly see in your headlights. Sometimes that means driving slower than the speed limit to give yourself enough time to see and react to any hazards ahead. Think about it. It's a lot better to be temporarily delayed than permanently dead.

PFC Jackson paid the ultimate price to bring you this lesson, so please learn from his mistakes. The last thing I want is to come out and write a story like this about you. 

Comments regarding this article may be directed to the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center Help Desk at (334) 255-1390, DSN 558-1390, or by e-mail at helpdesk@crc.army.mil.

horsin' around

CW3 MARK SHUMWAY
ASOC 06-002

If you're like me, the best off-duty activities involve being aboard a noble equine. Equestrian sports have grown in popularity over the last few decades, and many Soldiers enjoy riding in events ranging from rodeo to dressage. For others, a simple afternoon trail ride with the family—one of my favorite hobbies—can't be beat. These activities offer challenges, exercise and at least one large and powerful animal, so it's important the proper personal protective equipment (PPE) is always worn.

A few years ago, the public watched as actor Christopher Reeve (of Superman fame)

suffered, struggled and finally succumbed to injuries resulting from a horseback riding injury. Reeve was not alone. Recently, our Army lost a Soldier who died from head injuries incurred on a recreational trail ride (See Preliminary Loss Report 0639). According to U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center statistics, 195 Soldiers have suffered serious injuries—including six deaths—over the past 25 years. No matter what the riding discipline, the most serious injuries result from unintentional dismounts and typically involve head injuries.

I grew up riding and reluctantly wore a helmet, at least when my parents or instructor were



watching and while competing. Nowadays, most organized shows and events require contestants to wear headgear specifically designed for equestrian sports that has been approved by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or Safety Equipment Institute (SEI). Also, many riding stables and dude ranches require riders (at least children) to wear headgear for liability reasons. In

New York, where I reside, children under the age of 14 are required to wear a helmet. However, most states and a few events, particularly the cowboy/cowgirl ones, do not require riders to wear head protection.

When I fly an Army helicopter, go to the small arms range or serve in a combat zone, I wear my specially designed protective headgear. A few years ago, my wife asked me why I was ensuring our children had properly fitted helmets, yet

CONNECTIONS

For more information about equestrian safety, visit the National Ag Safety Database at <http://www.cdc.gov/nasd/docs/d001801-d001900/d001801/d001801.html>, or the Washington State University Cooperative Extension Web page at <http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/em4849/em4849.pdf>.

I mounted up with only a wide-brimmed hat. I thought about it and could give no real reasonable response. The technology for protective equine headgear has improved dramatically in recent years. I now wear a lightweight, comfortable helmet and no longer fight with my kids about their headgear; somebody needs to set the example.

However, helmets, while the most important PPE, are not the only items riders need to consider. Appropriate footwear is also a must. Cowboy boots and English field boots have developed over centuries—and it wasn't for a fashion statement. A shoe that is low-fitting, has a gripping sole or is overly wide is a recipe for disaster aboard a horse. These types of footwear easily catch in stirrups. If thrown, the rider can have a foot entangled in a stirrup and be dragged along by a galloping horse. So leave the running shoes at home when riding; wear footwear that goes over the ankle, narrows to the toe, has a low heel and has a smooth sole.

Make sure you also consider all of your attire before mounting

up. Wear long trousers that will protect legs from passing brush or in a fall. Shirts should cover the entire torso, shoulders and possibly the arms to avoid scratches or sun exposure. Gloves are a good idea to keep hands warm and cover jewelry; however, they must allow the rider to grip the reins. Riders may want to consider additional upper torso protection in the form of a vest designed for riding—especially in events where the rider has the potential of getting stepped on. Nothing on your body should be so loose it catches on close

objects or to the saddle while mounting or dismounting. Protective eyewear is also a good idea when riding through low-hanging brush, and sunglasses allow better vision while riding over snow or with bright sunlight.

Riding is truly an American tradition, with the horse still carrying Soldiers on and off duty. These elegant creatures have served us well—long before the automobile and aerial vehicles took this role. Throughout this long history, man has learned again and again how a horse's power can be of great use or result in unfortunate

injury or death.

However, the use and wear of appropriate PPE while riding is only one piece of the pie; riders also need to apply Composite Risk Management (CRM) to riding, just as they would on duty. Other hazards common to riders are overconfidence, lack of experience and an unfamiliar horse/rider relationship. By applying CRM, riding can be an activity for all to enjoy! 🐾

Contact the author at (518) 786-4354 or by e-mail at mark.e.shumway@us.army.mil.

PLR

PRELIMINARY LOSS REPORTS

A MEDCOM Soldier was killed in a horseback riding accident on 25 November, 2005, at 0930 local in Aiken, S.C. The 54-year-old colonel was riding with another officer when he was thrown from his horse, sustaining fatal head injuries.

Don't let similar accidents happen in your formation. The following tactics, techniques and procedures target horseback riding activities in general:

- Wear an American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM)-approved riding helmet. Numerous agencies

and safety committees cite the majority of rider fatalities are due to head injuries.

- Always ride in complete control; be aware of your horse's strength, nature and behavior. Be alert to things which may frighten the horse. The National Ag Safety Database offers some suggestions on equestrian activities including mounting, dismounting and riding horses safely.

- Always ride with a buddy and ride at the speed of the least-experienced rider.

saved by the belt

HANS BALKE
82nd Airborne Division
4th Brigade Combat Team Safety
Fort Bragg, N.C.

I've always considered my wife and myself good drivers. I believed we could not only take care of ourselves on the road but also compensate for any bad drivers we encountered. All it took was one event is to forever dispel that silly notion.

It was a nice, sunny day in Fayetteville, N.C., and my wife and I were on our way to the commissary in her Isuzu pickup. Traveling down a winding two-lane road, we were doing the posted 45 mph speed limit. As we came around the corner and entered a straight portion of the road, I suddenly saw a car coming toward us at about a 45-degree angle. The driver was drunk and had apparently fallen asleep at the wheel. In an instant, he slammed into the driver's side

of our front bumper.

The impact threw me against the seatbelt as our truck slid sideways down the road. I expected our pickup to roll over because the tires sounded as if they were digging into the asphalt. It seemed to take forever for the truck to finally come to a stop, although it probably took just seconds. When we did finally stop, my wife looked like she was in shock. Although I didn't feel like it, I probably was in shock, too. I really don't know how far we slid sideways, but

looking back at the scene we estimated about 75 to 100 feet. Fortunately, we stayed in our lane and didn't slide into the oncoming traffic.

The impact had nearly pushed the hood of the Isuzu into the driver's compartment. Coolant from the broken radiator sprayed all over the hot engine compartment, emitting clouds of steam and an eerie hissing sound. Thinking the steam was evaporating fuel, my concern turned to getting my wife out of the truck as soon as possible rather

than waiting for the paramedics to arrive.

A Good Samaritan helped me pull her from the mangled mess, and we laid her on the side of the road and waited for the ambulance. In retrospect, we shouldn't have moved her because she could have suffered a spinal injury in the accident. That's why I said I probably was in shock, too, because I knew the proper procedure and didn't follow it. Removing accident victims from a vehicle is best left to qualified personnel to



prevent further injury.

My wife, who was also wearing her seatbelt, wasn't too badly injured in the crash. She ended up with some serious bruises and was in pain for a couple of weeks, but it could have been a lot worse. The steering wheel had buckled on impact and was pushed back, stopping just inches away from her face. We found out later that her head had struck the steering wheel, which caused some abrasions on her face. Her left leg was also jammed in the wheelwell near the floorboard and, on first glance, appeared to

be crushed. However, genetics had bestowed upon her some slender legs, so she escaped a potentially crippling injury. Also, she never had a chance to hit the brakes before the impact, which was probably a good thing. Her injuries would have been worse had her foot been on the brake pedal when the impact pushed it into the driver's compartment.

We later learned the driver that hit us had decided to stop by his favorite watering hole after coming off the midnight shift. Unwisely, he chose to get back on

the road afterward and endangered not only his life but the lives of countless others. As he drifted from side to side on the road for several miles, motorists behind him flashed their lights to try to get his attention. One motorist later told me he expected something like this accident to happen.

While my wife and I were spared any serious injuries, we did gain some very important lessons learned. First, seatbelts save lives—I know for a fact they saved ours that day. I buckle up whenever I get into a car and make sure

my passengers do the same. Second, no matter how safely you drive, you can't always anticipate and avoid every bad driver on the road. However, while you can't always escape bad drivers, you can always protect yourself and your passengers by having everyone buckle up. When everything else is going wrong, a seatbelt may be the only thing left that's going right. 🚗

Contact the author at (910) 432-2699, DSN 239-2699, or by e-mail at hans.balke@us.army.mil.

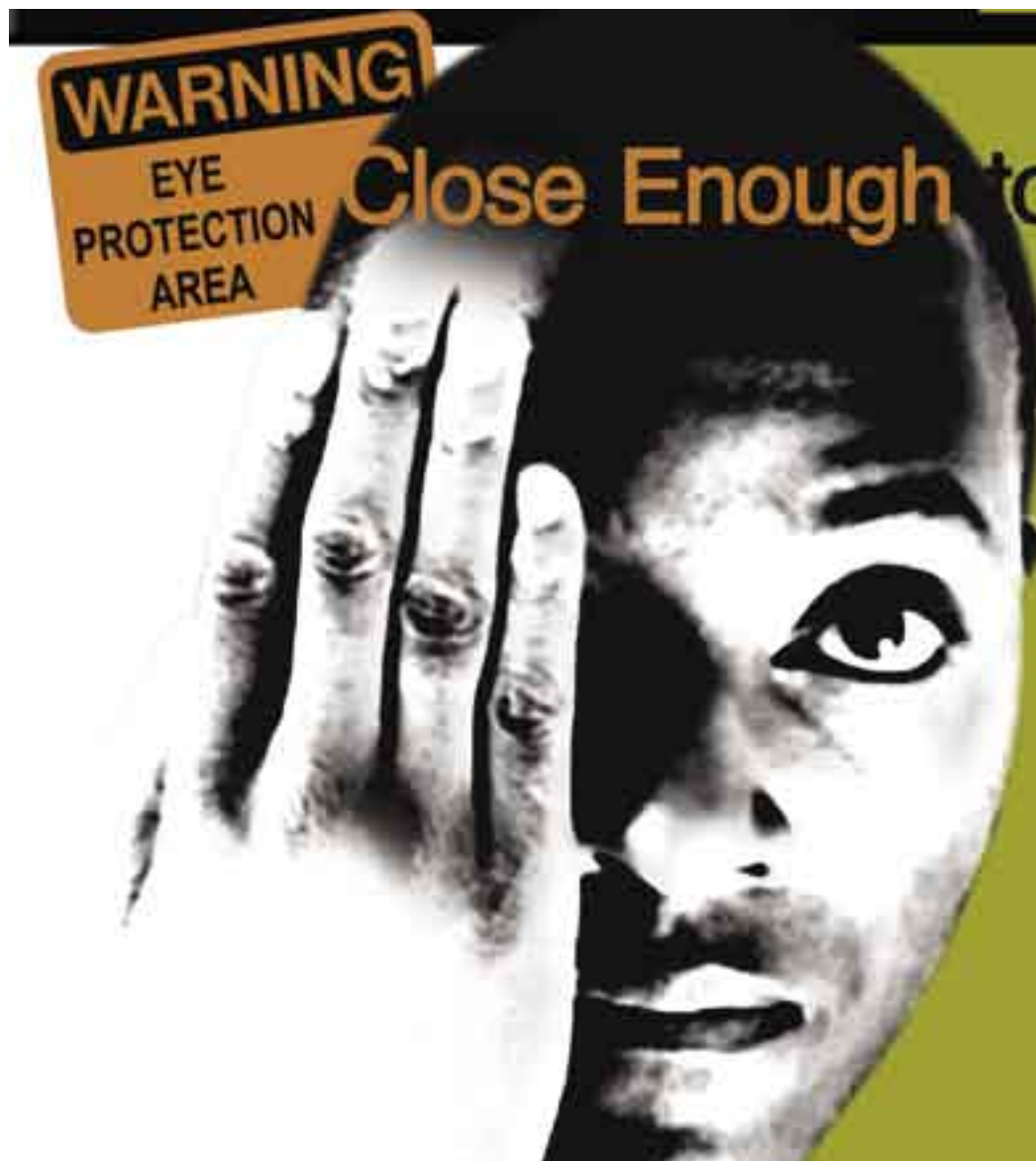
CLOSE enough to make you think

SUSAN JERVIS
Army Materiel Command
Fort Belvoir, Va.

Robert is headed home after being released from the post clinic. “Wow, I was really, really, lucky today,” he keeps telling himself as he drives home. Earlier in the afternoon, Robert had been walking through the metal shop he supervises. He stopped to talk to Joe, his team leader, but had to wait for Joe to finish a grinding job. Robert was deep in thought about the new production goals as he waited for Joe to wrap up the piece. Suddenly the part Joe was working on slipped and a metal shard went flying toward Robert. He didn’t even see it coming.

Robert was jarred from his thoughts by a sharp pain in his left eye. Suddenly there was lots of blood and he couldn’t open his eye. The next few minutes were a blur as Joe helped him to a nearby chair and called the post ambulance. The EMTs arrived quickly and helped Robert into the ambulance and to the clinic.

Fortunately, the shard hit Robert in the eyelid and didn’t do any damage to his eye.



Robert is grateful for what he terms a “near miss.” However, he can’t believe he was careless enough to go into the grinding area without the proper protective equipment. It was one of the worst of all times to forget his safety glasses. The memory of this accident keeps haunting Robert, causing him to think about ways to motivate this team to prevent future incidents.

The next morning, when Robert gets to his office, he starts considering ways to use yesterday’s events to motivate his team. After his first cup of coffee, he starts to draft a safety resolution for his team. He would love to see his entire team go the year without any accidents. Is that even possible given the type of work performed? He’s not sure, but it is certainly worth the try. Robert starts typing a note to his team.

“Yesterday I experienced something I hope none of you will ever have to experience. Fortunately, I was not seriously injured by my lack of safety consciousness. Based on my close call, I want to challenge our team to set a goal of going the rest of 2006 without an accident.”

Robert stops a minute and re-reads what he’s just written. He hopes his team

likes the idea of having a challenge. His work group is a very competitive, and the idea of a challenge will probably appeal to them. Now for the tricky part ... what can he do to help his work team stick to the goal? Robert takes another sip of coffee and starts typing again.

“To help remind us of the importance of having an accident-free year, we will be setting up a goal board in the break room. Please bring in a picture of something or someone important to you. Each day, when you see the board you will be reminded of those people or things that are important to you. These pictures will serve as a constant visual reminder of why each of us is working toward a goal of zero accidents for the rest of 2006.”

Robert looks over the paragraph and thinks about how he can adapt the concept of a written contract to his work unit. A contract would signify the importance and commitment of each person to the safety goal. Maybe he could ask each employee to prepare an individual contract. On second thought, since safety depends on everyone doing their part and watching out for each other, a group contract might work better. Maybe the group should develop a contract and


then everyone could sign it. That should help ensure buy-in from all.

“To help each of us understand the significance of our zero accident goal, we will draft a written contract during our next brown bag lunch. Please come to this meeting with ideas on how we, as a team, can achieve an accident-free year. The contract will include what we will do as individuals, as co-workers and I as the supervisor. I look forward to hearing your ideas as we finalize this contract. Once signed, we’ll place copies on our goal board and throughout the workplace.”

Once the contract is in place, some rewards would help make the goal a reality. He doesn’t really have money in his budget for incentive awards, but there are probably small rewards he could offer to the group.

“In our effort to achieve a year without accidents, I want to offer incentives for each month we meet our objective. After completing the first month without an accident, all team members will enjoy an extra 15-minute break on the day of their choosing. After completing a second month, our team will have a working lunch in the executive

lunchroom ...”

Robert re-reads the entire memo and thinks his team will take on this challenge. With the right motivational tools in place, they should achieve success. Robert grabs the memo from the printer and heads to the metal works department. It’s time to talk to his team about his close call yesterday and motivate them to make safety a priority. By leading his team to better practice workplace safety, maybe he can prevent one of them from having a painful, possibly blinding, accident. 

Editor’s Note: This is Susan Jervis’ final article for ImpaX. She has recently accepted a position with the Defense Logistics Agency. Her efforts representing civilian, family and occupational safety themes have been greatly appreciated in this publication.



The following reports reflect accidents that have happened to Soldiers in their privately owned vehicles, during recreational activities and in other non-tactical environments.

POV

Class A

- A female sergeant was riding in a car driven by her 19-year-old daughter when their POV swerved and crossed the median and struck an on-coming vehicle. The sergeant and her daughter were both killed.

- A 20-year-old private first class was reportedly speeding when she lost control in a curve and skidded into an on-coming vehicle. The Soldier was killed in the crash.

- A 25-year-old male corporal was driving his POV when he ran off the road and struck a tree. The Soldier suffered serious brain and spinal cord injuries and later died.

- A private was operating his POV when he was involved in a single-car rollover accident. The Soldier was taken to a hospital and is in a drug-induced coma with severe trauma to his spinal cord. He will

probably be paralyzed below the waist.

- A 49-year-old sergeant first class was a passenger in a truck driven by a civilian when another vehicle crossed into their lane and struck them head-on. The Soldier, who was not wearing his seatbelt, was pinned inside the vehicle and died at the scene.

Class C

- A 21-year-old male E-4 was driving his Mitsubishi Eclipse GT back to post after a visit home. After a brief rest break at 1 a.m., he got back into his vehicle and continued driving. As he drove, he changed lanes and hit a slippery spot on the road and began to spin. His car went across the on-coming lanes, went off the left shoulder and hit numerous objects alongside the road. Startled by what had happened, the Soldier tried to pull back onto the road, but his vehicle began sliding sideways and slammed into a guardrail. The impact knocked his still-spinning

vehicle into the left lane and onto a grass median, where the vehicle finally stopped. A few minutes later, the driver of another vehicle called 911 and an ambulance came and transported the Soldier to a hospital. He was treated for scrapes and abrasions to his hands and head and then released. The Soldier was wearing his seatbelt and lost only one workday.

- A 42-year-old National Guard E-4 was driving his vehicle on an interstate when he ran off the road and overturned. During the accident, the Soldier was thrown through his vehicle's sunroof and is currently hospitalized in a coma. Seatbelt use was not reported.

POM

Class A

- A 21-year-old private was operating his motorcycle when he reportedly swerved to miss a deer and hit loose gravel and lost control. The Soldier was thrown from his motorcycle and killed. Helmet use

was not reported.

Class B

- A 27-year-old male sergeant was riding his motorcycle on the downgrade of a bridge when he lost control and hit the median. The Soldier was thrown from his motorcycle and struck a tree, severing one of his legs.

Personnel Injury

Class A

- A private was at a party and began horsing around with friends who were striking each other in the head. The Soldier was struck and knocked unconscious and was later pronounced dead at an emergency room.

- A 21-year-old male E-4 was descending on a mall escalator when he decided to goof-off and grabbed the rail of the escalator going up to the third level. When he reached the third level he lost his grip and fell to the second level, striking his head and suffering fatal injuries.



• A 49-year-old sergeant first class was a passenger in a truck driven by a civilian when another vehicle crossed into their lane and struck them head-on. The Soldier, who was not wearing his seatbelt, died at the scene.

WEAR YOUR SEATBELT!

Class C

- A 23-year-old male private who had been restricted to post had gotten off post and was hitchhiking when he was struck by a POV. The Soldier, who sustained a broken shoulder and leg, was under the influence of alcohol at the time of the accident.

- A 21-year-old male specialist was attempting to tear apart a wooden wall locker into smaller pieces so it could be transported inside a vehicle and turned in

as scrap wood. The Soldier attempted to knock the back off the locker by running into it and, instead, knocked the locker over. The locker fell with the Soldier on top, pinning his right hand to the floor beneath it. The Soldier's right hand was caught beneath the locker and his middle and ring fingers were torn open, exposing the muscles underneath. The Soldier was transported to a local hospital where the exposed muscles were

cut off and the exposed fingertip bones filed to prevent further infection. The Soldier was hospitalized for five days, lost three workdays, and was placed on 45 days' restricted duty.

- A 20-year-old female private first class was leaving her sister's house on an Army installation and began descending a flight of stairs en route to her POV. At the first step, her shoe (she'd been in a hurry and hadn't tied

her shoe laces) came off, which caused her to lose her balance. As she fell, she tumbled down several stairs, hitting her forehead on the railing and sustaining a concussion and landing hard on her right foot and breaking it. She failed to report for duty for the following three days and was placed in AWOL status. Her injuries resulted in her being hospitalized for one day, losing four workdays, and being placed on restricted duty for 90 days.

UNNATURAL selections



Wanna little "Black Magic?" How about four drunk teenagers—two girls and two guys—hitting the road in the wee, dark hours of the early morning? Into our witches' cauldron we'll add a dollop of eardrum-rupturing music and a generous helping of speed. We'll also remove any seatbelts, and, to top off our recipe, add a ringing cell phone. Our femme-fatal driver couldn't resist the urge to chat, but when she picked up the phone it seems a tree sprang up in front of her car (or maybe she went slightly off the road). No

matter; in just the twinkling of an eye she was not-so-gently slipped into the realm of never-never land for a well-deserved, but very unconscious, rest. To this well-seasoned cauldron of calamity we hasten to add a twist of irony. Seems the call was from a friend who had a bad feeling something might happen to the driver and wanted her to come back. Could it have been a premonition? Could it have been clairvoyance? Maybe it was a friend who knew she shouldn't have let the driver leave her house and drive drunk.

SNUFFY musclehead OR meathead

BOB VAN ELSBERG
Managing Editor

Snuffy's last adventure launched him into the sky on his skateboard only to twist his right foot and ankle into an anatomically incorrect position upon landing. Having recovered from his airborne antics, he's now decided to try pumping iron. After all, a "Buff" Snuffy presents a certain "Soldier-like" appearance—not to mention the female Soldiers on post admire a man with bulging muscles. "It's all to the good," Snuffy told himself as he headed to a local YMCA for a lunchtime workout.

To be fair, Snuffy has never been a 90-pound weakling. When he wasn't recovering from various interesting injuries, he was a regular visitor to the gym, including the

weight room. Snuffy's philosophy was simple, "No strain, no pain ... no gain!" And if there was one thing Snuffy knew volumes about, it was pain. As he positioned himself on the bench press, little did he know he was about to write a new chapter.

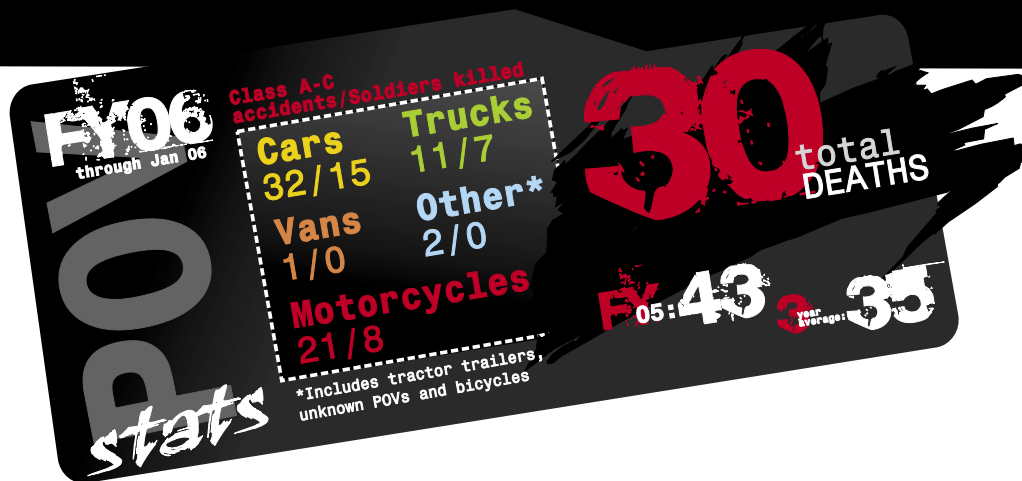
"One-uh, two-uh, three-uh"... Snuffy counted off 10 reps as

he raised and lowered the 135-pound weight. "No sweat," he thought as he added another 15 pounds and started doing sets of eight repetitions. Feeling his manly self, he bumped up the weights to 225 and then 250 pounds and continued knocking out sets of eight reps. The muscles in Snuffy's arms bulged as he pushed the bar up and

then lowered it. Sweat beaded and glistened on his forehead as he concentrated on carefully maintaining his form.

His muscles had answered the challenge magnificently; but could he now go beyond 300 pounds? There was only one way to find out. After all, remember—"No strain, no pain ... no gain!"






The weights and bar now totaled 305 pounds. This was no “wussy-weight”—this would be a real challenge. The bar went up and down as he did sets of five reps. Snuffy grunted with each effort, but he made it. Now for the final challenge—320 pounds!

“I can do it, I can do it, I can do it ...” Snuffy told himself as he knocked out the first set of five reps. His multiple, magnificent, manly muscles masterfully maneuvered (Try saying that three times quickly!)

concentration was interrupted by the sound of ripping muscles and the feeling Godzilla had just taken a bite out of his chest. Down came the weight. Gravity, in its patient but inevitable way, had won the contest.

A quick trip to the emergency room led to a diagnosis of a torn pectoral muscle. As Snuffy had learned so many times before, muscle pain is the gift that keeps on giving. Perhaps the word “acute” in the accident report suggested the

weights—not men—are made of iron and gravity still hurts when it gets the better of you. Also, it didn’t help that Snuffy failed to have a spotter working with him that day. You know—someone who could have helped him when weight overcame will.

Being buff is a marvelous thing, but having torn pectorals and 90 days’ restricted duty tends to decrease muscle tone. Contrary to Snuffy’s aforementioned motto, it seems too much strain leads to lots of pain and absolutely no gain. 

Contact the author at (334) 255-2688, DSN 558-2688, or by e-mail at robert.vanelsberg@crc.army.mil.

CONNECTIONS

For more information on safe weightlifting techniques, visit <http://www.bodybuildingforyou.com/articles-submit/ghf/gym-safety.htm>.

the weight. Snuffy was locked in hand-to-hand combat with the forces of gravity and winning—at least for a while. He started his second set of five reps.

“One-uh, two-uh, three-uh—yeowww!” ... Snuffy’s intense

bountifulness of that gift. The following day, our weakened weightlifter did his best imitation of a torpedo being loaded into a tube as he was slid into a magnetic resonance imaging machine (even less fun than it sounds) for a “closer” look. Sure ‘nuff, Snuffy had proven

BG Joseph A. Smith Commander
COL George B. Lafer Deputy Commander
John Hooks Publishing Supervisor
Bob Van Elsberg Managing Editor
Chris Frazier Staff Editor
Blake Grantham Art & Design

ImpaX is published by the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center, Bldg. 4905, 5th Avenue, Fort Rucker, AL 36362-5363. Information is for accident prevention purposes only and is specifically prohibited for use for punitive purposes or matters of liability, litigation, or competition. Address questions about content to DSN 558-2688 (334-255-2688). To submit information for publication, use FAX 334-255-3003 (Mr. Bob Van Elsberg) or e-mail robert.vanelsberg@crc.army.mil. Address questions about distribution to DSN 558-2062 (334-255-2062). Visit our Web site at <https://crc.army.mil/>.

impaX